

ARTICLES FROM THE PERSUADER VOLUME VIII

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ARTICLES FROM **THE PERSUADER** VOLUME 8

The articles in this book appeared in our semi-annual paper, **THE PERSUADER**, from 2012 to 2014. They were written by Edgar Lee Paschall, Pastor of New Hope Baptist Church, unless otherwise designated. These articles are designed to persuade one to take a fresh look at TRUTH and to RIGHTLY DIVIDE God's Word. If we can be of help in any way, please feel free to call or write. If you need more copies of this book or any of our other books please write to the above address. These books are free as long as funds are available to keep printing them. Use the material in this book any way that brings honor and glory to our Lord.

Because of Calvary,
Edgar Lee Paschall

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HAVE YOU EXERCISED SAVING FAITH?

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:36)

I could also entitle this "Have you believed unto salvation?" The reason for writing this article is that there are many who say that they believe and are depending on that belief to escape hell and carry them to heaven when they die, but they do not believe according to the Scripture; therefore, they have been deceived. I write to show you a basis to examine yourself to see if you have exercised saving faith. (II Cor. 13:5: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates.") Now is the time to examine while you are mentally able to do so--while there is a long suffering God, a preacher of righteousness, a striving Spirit, and an open door. All of which enables you to seek the Lord and be saved by exercising saving faith.

I want to show you two examples in the Bible where it says they "believed" but they were not saved as the Bible clearly brings out.

1. John 2:23-24: "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men." They believed but Jesus knew their heart and condition and He did not "commit" Himself to them. "Commit" in verse 24 is translated from the same Greek word as "believed" in verse 23. Thus, Jesus is saying that He did not believe them. Our Lord knows the heart of all men. They did not exercise saving faith; therefore, they were not saved.

2. John 8:30: "As he spake these words, many believed on him." The Bible says they believed in this verse. Sounds good. Let us put them in the baptistry, in the choir, in a Sunday School teaching position, and call them to pastor our church. But wait a minute! Jesus put some conditions on them in John 8:31-32: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." He said if they would continue in His word, they would be His disciples indeed--truly and they would know the truth and be made free--means they would be saved. This is a conditional promise "If-then"-- if they would meet the condition, then the promise would be a reality.

The condition--continue in His word. "Continue" means to abide, do not

depart, or basically means "do what you know to do at the time" or "step in what light you have." It implies obedience--obedience to what the Lord quickens or speaks to you. This is connected to Rom. 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This verse makes it clear that faith comes by the Lord speaking to you. He may speak to you as you read His word or by His servant preaching His word to you. And what He quickens to you is what brings saving faith, which is a gift (Eph. 2:8: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.") to you. At that point you can exercise saving faith and have the reality of the promise--be His disciple indeed and be set free from your bondage of sin--be saved.

But these Jews in John 8 refuse to do what the Lord said and their outcome we find in John 8:44: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." Thus, they were not saved because they did not exercise saving faith even though the Bible said they believed. Their believing could be only in their head, which is what men preach today. We must believe with the heart and not just the head.

It is interesting to note that throughout the Bible, our text included, saving faith is dealt with. The word used is "believeth" which ends in a suffix "eth," which denotes a continuous, habitual lifestyle of believing. If saving faith is exercised, that person believes today, tomorrow, next year, and if he should live that long, a hundred years from now. There will never be a time when he ceases to believe.

Jesus said in Mark 1:15: "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Thus, for a person to exercise saving faith, he must repent and that cannot occur until repentance has been granted to him, and that takes a completed work of Holy Ghost conviction.

I ask you again "have you exercised saving faith?" If you have, our text says you have "everlasting life." Our text also states plainly that if you have not ever exercised saving faith, you will not "see life." "But the wrath of God abideth on" you. This denotes continuous wrath, which means that hell and the lake of fire awaits you. It does not have to be that way. Get honest with yourself and God about your real condition and need now, while there is hope for your soul and allow the Holy Spirit to do a complete work of Holy Ghost conviction in all three areas of John 16:8. ("And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.")

Mat. 7:22-23 ("Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not

prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.") makes it clear that many thought they had been saved. But at the Great White Throne of Judgment, they will give their excuses and the Lord will say "Depart from me I never knew you." He could say you never exercised saving faith! How sad it will be for many in that day! I ask you again, "Have you exercised saving faith?" It is a must to be saved.

This is only a skeletal overview of this subject. If you would like some series on this subject, please feel free to contact us. We have written material, as well as CDs. All of our material is free of charge--just for the asking. I want to be true to your soul which is why I try to tell you the truth. THE PERSUADER - July-Dec., 2012

THE CURSE OF EASY-BELIEVISM

"The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just." Pro. 3:33

"Curse" means to call evil or injury down on. It is the infliction of temporal misfortunes ending with the "cutting off" of the wicked in the lake of fire. (Psa. 37:22: "For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.") "Easy-believism" is a phrase used to identify the practice of preachers and personal workers used in churches the last 50+ years to get others to make a so-called "profession of faith" when in reality it is a false profession. Such practice is wicked; therefore, there is a curse upon those who practice easy-believism and those deceived by such practices.

You may ask what are some examples of such a practice? In this article I will try to answer this question by just dealing with a few examples since there are many variations of easy-believism and I do not have the space to deal with all of them nor do I know all of them, for they seem to increase in number year by year.

One of the main examples is leaving out the work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of man's soul. Without His work of conviction and godly sorrow, there will be no repentance worked in a person's life. (Luke 13:3,5: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.") If there is no

repentance, there is no salvation. Then no Holy Spirit taking up His abode in man's heart. The Bible is clear, if one does not have "the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." (Rom. 8: 9: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.") This man is cursed and will be "cut off"--go to hell. (Psa. 37:22)

Another example: Many of those who believe that the Holy Spirit must convict will short circuit His work by not allowing His work to be complete in all three areas mentioned in John 16:8. ("And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.") These preachers usually put great emphasis on the judgment part, which is hell and leave out the most important part "righteousness" which is necessary to be saved. (Mat. 5:20: "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.") The Lord does not save you to keep you out of hell, He saves you for His glory and escaping hell is just a benefit of salvation. Therefore, when one practices this form of easy-believism they will cause the person they are dealing with to make a false profession. Thus, causing him to be deceived, cursed, and really "twofold more the child of hell." (Mat. 23:15: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.")

Third example: Telling those not saved that it is easy to be saved. I want to quote what George W. Truett wrote in his book "Some Vital Questions" concerning salvation. He was president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1927-1929. I quote him--"It is not easy to be saved. Jesus never one time said it was easy. How candid, how faithful He was, as He pointed out to men the way of salvation! He said: ('Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.' Mat. 7:13-14) Listen to His exhortation: ('Agonize ye to enter in at the strait gate.' Luke 13:24) The old word here is strive, but the proper word is agonize. The whole nature is required. (Agonize ye to enter in at the strait gate: for I say unto you the many shall seek to enter in.)--half heartedly seek, somewhat seek, partially seek, superficially seek--but such seeking will be in vain. They shall never be able to enter in. How candid Jesus is about the heavenly way, about what walking in it means!" End quote.

Basically, this is what Jesus told His disciples in Mat. 19:23-26 concerning the rich young ruler. In fact He said it was impossible with man but not with

God. (Mat. 19:26: "But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.") He used the word "hardly" in Mat. 19:23 which means with difficulty. ("Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.") Therefore, it is not easy to be saved from man's standpoint but from God's standpoint it is easy for nothing is too hard for God.

Therefore, if those who try to tell a man that it is easy to be saved, without explaining to him that it takes a completed work of Holy Ghost conviction whereby repentance and saving faith are imparted by Him so that he may repent and believe the gospel, a tare will be produced resulting in a false profession in that person and he will be under a curse because of their practicing easy-believism.

Fourth example: Many who have grown up under various practices of easy-believism have preconceived ideas about being saved. They usually make a profession of faith at an early age, even before they have reached the "knowledge of accountability," thus having doubts all their life. Then when the Holy Spirit begins to convict they are pressured by easy-believism tactics that they must get things settled right now, quickly. The result of that is that they make another profession which turns out to be false and many times they will go back to the first profession and hold on to that. The reality of this is that both professions (sometimes many are made) are not real and they remain under the curse of easy-believism. I am not saying it takes a long time to be saved but that it takes enough time for the Holy Spirit to bring a person to the complete reproof of sin, righteousness, and judgement. It takes time to make the soil of one's heart good ground, which by the way is the only ones saved in that parable in Mat. 13. (Mat. 13:23: "But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.")

Then, there are those who are told that if they have answered prayer they are saved. The Bible makes it plain in Acts 10:31 that Cornelius' prayer as a lost man was heard. (Acts 10:31: "And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.") If an answered prayer is all you have for assurance of your salvation, then you are under the curse of easy-believism.

Also, there are those who are told that if you have a call to preach you are saved. The Bible makes it clear that Paul was not saved until three days after he met Jesus on the road to Damascus when Annanias came to him and said, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16) His sins had not yet been

forgiven, yet when Paul testified, before King Agrippa in Acts 26, he stated the Lord told him he was to carry the gospel message to the Gentiles. (Acts 26: 16-18: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.") Thus, he had a call to preach the gospel three days before he was saved. If a call to preach is what you are basing your salvation on, you need to get honest with yourself that you are a product of and are under the curse of easy-believism and do not want to be identified with truth. Therefore, you hold on to nothing and will die and go to hell.

But you do not have to. Our Lord has already paid your curse on Calvary. (Gal. 3: 13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.") And He sent the Holy Spirit to convict you of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He has been good to you to lead you to repentance. (Rom. 2: 4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?") There is hope for you because there is a long-suffering God, a preacher of righteousness, a striving Spirit, and an open door. Get honest with yourself and with God and allow Him to finish His work in you. Jesus said in John 8: 31-32 to those Jews who believed with their head and not their heart to: "Continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." This is not works for salvation but if you do not put forth an effort to overcome the stumbling blocks of Satan and the snares of easy-believism, you will remain under its curse and die and go to hell.

This is only a skeletal outline of several series of CD's we have available without charge for material or freight--just for the asking. I care. I will be your friend and be glad to discuss your condition in confidence if you so desire. I want to be true to your soul which is why I try to tell you the truth. THE PERSUADER - Jan.-June, 2013

Bible Salvation

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6

Salvation is of the Lord for He is the "author and finisher of our faith." (Heb. 12:2) The word salvation means deliverance. Usually when we refer to salvation in a spiritual sense, we are speaking about justification--saved from the penalty of sin.

Man is born with a sin nature and has a dead spirit. ("And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1) The reason for this is due to Adam's sin in the garden when he disobeyed God and ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God had said the day you eat of that tree, you will die and Adam, who was made in the image of God, died spiritually and was separated from God. Even though he was saved, he still passed on a dead spirit to all of his offspring, including us. Thus, we are not born in the image of God but in the image of Adam. ("Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12)

We are safe until we reach a knowledge of accountability (not a certain age of accountability but knowledge) and then we are subject to the wrath of God and need to be saved--justified--delivered from the penalty of sin. James 1:18 states, "begat he us with the word of truth." Therefore, we must be under the preaching of truth to be saved--justified. ("The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." Psa. 145:18)

To be justified takes a completed work of Holy Ghost conviction which involves "reproval" ("And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." John 16:8-11) and "godly sorrow," ("For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." II Cor. 7:10) When the work of reproof is complete in all three areas--sin, righteousness, and judgment, then and only then can a person obey the gospel by repenting and believing, thus being saved--justified--saved from the penalty of sin.

But the Lord is not through with us for Phil 1:6 says: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" I know this is written to the saints of God but He began a work in you long before you were justified even when you did not realize it. He gives light to the sinner and awakens him to his condition and his need of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if that person will continue in His Word, basically what He has quickened to you, he will be saved--justified.

("Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8: 31-32; "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD." Hosea 6: 3a)

When justified He continues to work in Bible Salvation. Paul referring to sanctification said in Gal. 4: 19, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." Sanctification is not perfection as some say but the walk of progression toward perfection that will be gained at the first resurrection. Sanctification is the soul being saved from the power of sin day by day. James 1:21 says, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." "Wherefore" means in view of verse 18 where it says we are begotten by "the Word of truth." Since one is justified we are commanded to lay aside all that overflow of wickedness and receive the engrafted Word which is able to save (present tense) our souls. The Word is engrafted when one is justified--spirit saved from the penalty of sin. He that began a good work (Phil. 1: 6) will sanctify--his soul will be saved from the power of sin day by day. Ezk. 36: 27 ("And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.") makes it plain that one who is justified (has the Lord's Spirit within) will be sanctified (be caused to walk in His statutes and keep his judgments and do them). Titus 2: 11-12 states that the grace of God will teach the justified (us) to deny some things and how to live in this world--sanctification of the soul--saved from the power of sin day by day. ("For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Titus 2: 11-12)

If what you profess does not clean you up on the outside, then you have not the Spirit of Christ living inside. ("But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. 8: 9) I Timothy 2: 9 states, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." This verse deals with both women and men, in context ("in like manner" refers back to men in verse 8) and forbids wearing tight clothing that exposes the curves of one's body or exposing flesh that should not be exposed in public. Blue jeans on women are not modest. You may say I have liberty and it is true that you do, if justified. ("Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Gal. 5: 1) But liberty is not a license to sin. ("For, brethren, ye

have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Gal. 5:13) You may say I have no condemnation because I am saved and quote Rom. 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." It is true there is no condemnation to hell if you are "in Christ" because you are justified--saved from the penalty of sin. Rom. 8:1 also refers to sanctification by the phrase "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." If you walk after the flesh and not after the Spirit, there will be condemnation (chastisement) come your way, if you are truly saved.

I Peter 1:16 quoting Lev. 11:44 says "Be ye holy for I am holy." Heb. 12:14 says, "without holiness no man shall see God." Holiness is the outcome of the setting apart work of the Holy Spirit in justification and a sanctified walk in one's life.

I John 3:2-3 states that if one has a hope of seeing the Lord when he comes back, he will purify himself. ("Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.") If you knew the judge was at the door, there would be some straightening up in your living. ("Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door." James 5:9)

As Phil. 1:6 states, He justifies and sanctifies but He is not through yet--He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. This is referring to the rapture, not a Bible word but a Bible principle. We have a promise that He will conform us to His image--glorification. ("For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Rom. 8:29) Therefore, He works all things together for good. ("And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28) When Jesus ascended in Acts 1:11 the angels said that this same Jesus is coming back as you saw Him go. I Thess. 4:16-17 says the Lord Himself is coming, not another Jesus. ("For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.")

The same grace that teaches us how to live a sanctified life in Titus 2:12 will teach us to look with expectation for Him to come again. ("Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13) And when He comes I Cor. 15:51-57 tells us what

will happen. ("Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.") Then, we will be in His image and our bodies will be saved from the presence of sin--glorification. And the conditions of Psa. 24: 3-4 will be fulfilled. ("Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.")

Paul said in I Thess. 5: 23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus, all three will be preserved, if you have Bible Salvation for Phil 1:6 is true. Our spirit will be justified--save from the penalty of sin, our soul will be sanctified--saved from the power of sin, and our body will be glorified--saved from the presence of sin.

Rom. 8: 30 ("Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.") makes it clear that all He justifies He glorifies. All because He began a good work in you. That is Bible salvation!

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THE PERSUADER - July-Dec., 2013

WHEN AND WHERE WAS ABRAHAM SAVED?*

This is a question that is not hard to answer if we will simply look in the Bible,

God's Word. Paul said in Romans 4:3, "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." This type of righteousness is required for one to go to heaven. "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:20)

Paul also stated this same basic verse in Gal. 3:6 and James quoted it in James 2:23. Abraham was saved when he believed God's promise. "And he believed in the Lord: and he counted it to him for righteousness." (Gen. 15:6) Paul answered the Philippian jailer's question of, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" by saying, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." This is what Abraham did, "believe God" and he was saved. This answered the question, "When?"

The other question is "Where was he saved?" There must be a time and place when one is saved. You may not know the minute, day or hour but the time and place will be a very vivid reality in your life. If it is not, then you are not saved. Genesis 15:6 is the scripture that Paul and James quoted concerning Abraham. So to find out the "Where?", we simply need to find out where Genesis 15:6 occurred.

That is easy to do because Gen. 15:1 says, "After these things." After what things? After God appeared unto him in Mesopotamia and said, "Get thee out of thy country, and from they kindred, and go into the land which I shall shew thee (shew thee as you go)." (Acts 7:2-3) After he had dwelt in Haran for a number of years (unable to establish the exact number of years; may have been from 5 to 32 years). After God spoke to him at Haran when he was 75 years of age in Gen. 12:1-3. After he had entered Canaan and God had spoke to him again. (Gen. 12:5-7) After he had built an altar and worshiped. (Gen. 12:8, 13:4) After he had separated from Lot. (Gen. 13:5-13) After God spoke to him the fourth time (recorded) in Gen. 13:14-18. After he had defeated Chedorlaomer and his league of kings with 318 trained servants. (Gen. 14:1-16) After he paid tithes to Melchizedek. (Gen. 14:17-24)

Gen. 15:1 then says, "After these things," God spoke to Abram, for his name had not been changed to Abraham yet. At this time and place, nine years after Abram entered Canaan when he was 84 years old, he believed God and was saved. (Gen. 15:1-6) You see the Bible tells us when and where Abraham was saved.

This goes to show you how many times we fail to simply take God's Word and let it speak to us. For years I thought he was saved before he left Mesopotamia, because tradition leads us to believe that due to what Heb. 11:8 says, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." This raises another question. If Abraham was saved nine years after being in Canaan (we just proved he did), what kind of faith did he have when he left Mesopotamia?

Heb. 11:6 says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. "The word "cometh" means along the path of understanding. The first time God spoke to Abram, he had "intellectual" faith, he believed "God is." (Heb. 11:6) Faith, whatever kind it may be will cause you to act; therefore "intellectual" faith caused Abram to move out of Mesopotamia, "looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11:10) This is "seeking" faith that brought him to an understanding of the promise of God so that he could believe unto salvation, by "saving" faith.

When God first spoke to Abram in Mesopotamia he did not understand the promise because he carried his father and Lot with him. God said, "Get thee out . . . from thy kindred." When in Haran after his father died, God spoke and said the same thing but Abram did not obey fully. He carried Lot, his kindred. Also when in Canaan, God spoke saying, "He would give his seed this land." (Gen. 12:7) Abram still did not understand the promise even though he had more information. In Gen. 13:15-16, God gave him more information when He added, "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth." It is evident from Gen. 15:1-6 that Abram still did not understand, but as the Lord began to explain the promise to him, "saving" faith came and Abram "believed God" and he was saved.

"Saving" faith is necessary for one to be saved. "Intellectual" and "seeking" faith will allow you to believe the facts but salvation will not come until "saving" faith is exercised. This is evident in John 2:23-25. "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man." Jesus did not commit Himself to these people because they believed only the facts, thus "intellectual" faith. If Jesus does not commit to you, you are not saved.

Many today say, "all you have to do to be saved is believe." This is true if you believe from the heart with "saving" faith. This is what Abraham did nine

years after he got in the land of Canaan. He had a time and place where the Lord saved him.

The question now is, "Do you have a time and place where the Lord gave you understanding of His promise and you believed unto salvation with "saving" faith?" If not you had better seek Him with all your heart so that you can be saved and then you will have a time and place where the Lord puts righteousness on your account.

I thank the Lord that the Bible answers our questions if we will rightly divide the Word and listen to the Holy Spirit instead of following tradition.

We have several series of cd's that are without charge that would be of help to you concerning this subject. They will be sent to you just for the asking. We care for your soul.

THE PERSUADER - Jan.-June, 2014

*This article was first written in 1992. Since that time we have had many more added to our mailing list and I felt the need to publish it again since the Abraham principle is missing in many professions of faith and many will be cast into hell because this truth is not a part of their salvation experience. (Mat. 7:22-23) EDITOR

THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL

"We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth." (Col. 1:3-6)

I am not writing anything new, but like Peter I am just trying to put you in remembrance of what you already know or at least should know. ("Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth." II Peter 1: 12) There is a song that states, "I love to tell the old, old story." If you are saved, it will just thrill your heart and if you are not saved, may it speak to your heart and soul.

Paul said if any angel or any man preach any other gospel than what he preached, "let him be accursed"--condemned to die. In other words let that individual be cast into hell fire. ("But though we, or an angel from heaven,

preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal. 1:8-9) He clearly stated that the gospel of Christ is the death, burial, and the resurrection of Christ. ("For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." I Cor. 15:3-4) Therefore, we can say that we need to know the truth of the gospel.

1. The person of the gospel.

To know the truth of the gospel is to know the person of the gospel. The word "gospel" means good news--good news about the person of Christ. Paul said, "Christ died for our sins." (I Cor. 15: 3) This is what is referred to as the vicarious death of Christ which means substitutionary death of Christ--He took my place by paying my sin debt (my hell) and died in my place. He was buried, but after three days and nights He resurrected.

For Christ to qualify as my sin bearer, He had to be virgin born, thus, not having the sin nature of Adam which enabled Him to live a sinless life so He could bear my sins. After He resurrected, He ascended back to the Father who was satisfied with His Son's sacrifice of His blood by which He atoned for my sin. He then sat down at the right hand of God where He continues to make intercession for us. And one day He is coming back to redeem the bodies of all who are His--rapture.

For mankind to get in on the blessings of the gospel, the Holy Ghost must reprove (convince) of sin, righteousness, and judgment. ("And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." John 16:8-11) We call this Holy Ghost conviction and it must be complete in all three areas. When this occurs, a man is then able to obey the gospel which involves repenting and believing. Our Lord commanded this in Mark 1:15 ("And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.") and we are enabled to do so by the "sanctification of the Spirit." (Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." I Peter 1:2) When we obey the gospel we receive Christ, the person of the gospel and have eternal life. ("But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John 1:12; "He that hath the Son hath life;

and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." I John 5:12)

2. Product of the gospel.

When the gospel is received and believed, it brings about three things. This occurs in every person who is saved, without exception:

1) Spiritual Conversion.

The word converted is used in Peter's sermon in Acts 3:19. ("Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.") It means to turn again, to be changed in mind and conduct. This means that repentance was worked. Thus, there was double emphasis on repent in this verse. We are living in a day when many preachers are using the word "decision"--make a decision for Christ. Older preachers use to use the word "converted" but many today hate that word because that involves repentance and takes a work of godly sorrow (involved in Holy Ghost conviction). ("For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." II Cor. 7:10)

Have you been converted? "From what?" you may ask:

a) From the broad way to the narrow way. ("Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Mat. 7:13-14)

b) From darkness to light. ("Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Col:12-13)

c) From death unto life. ("Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24) Without exception the product of the gospel is "spiritual conversion."

2) Outward change.

Paul stated in II Cor. 5:17 that when one is saved he becomes a new creature in Christ. ("Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.")

Verse 6 of our text says it happens immediately--"since the day you heard." This is a product of the gospel without exception. Jesus said what is on the inside also comes on the outside. ("Woe unto you, scribes and

Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also." Mat. 23:25-26)

When the maniac of Gadara was saved, the people found him that day in his right mind and clothed. ("And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid." Mark 5:15) And when the woman at the well was saved she evidently looked different, walked different, and talked different that day, for her testimony to the men of the village caused some to believe. ("And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did." John 4:39)

In Acts 2 those who believed were baptized and bore witness to the truth of the gospel--immediately not 20 years down the road. And in Acts. 8 when the Eunuch believed, immediately he was baptized and went on his way rejoicing. Also, in Acts 10 when the Holy Ghost fell upon Cornelius, he believed and was baptized. All of these were baptized because there had been a change on the inside--saved. They were not baptized to bring about a change on the inside--baptism does not save anyone nor cleanse one on the inside.

3) Continual growth.

Our text in verse 6 states the saints in Colosse brought forth fruit since the day they heard the gospel. "Heard" means to hear with understanding enough to exercise saving faith which had been given to them because a work of reproof had been done. This means to hear with the ears of the heart because it is not enough to hear with just physical ears. In John 6:45 Jesus used the phrase, "Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." "Hath learned" means to have enough understanding to be good ground and be saved. ("But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." Mat. 13:23) Paul also said in verse 6 of our text. "And knew the grace of God in truth." "Knew" means to become thoroughly acquainted with--to know accurately and refers to their having understanding and being saved.

All who are saved will have continual growth, without exception, from the day they are saved. Paul said he thanked God "since we heard of your faith." (Verse 4) Faith (being saved) got out on them because faith works and continues. ("But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is

dead?" James 2:20) James 2:24 ("Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.") refers to others ("ye see") saying that you are saved by seeing your works. This verse does not contradict Rom. 4:2 ("For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.") which refers to being justified (saved) before God. God sees the heart and what is on the inside comes out because, without exception, there will be continual growth. Those who say they are saved and do not have continual growth are just stony ground hearers--just professors not possessors. ("Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." Mat. 13:21) The saved in Acts 2:42 ("And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.") and in verse 46 ("And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.") continued steadfastly and daily in the apostles' doctrine.

When the gospel is received and believed, without exception, three things will be the product of the gospel: 1) Spiritual conversion, 2) outward change, and 3) continual growth.

This is not only true of those in Bible times but also in our time. The Bible states plainly in Heb. 3:14 that the saved will continue "unto the end." Jesus stated plainly in John 8:32 that if one continues "in my word," that he is truly His disciple. The opposite of that is, if you don't continue then you are not truly His disciple.

Again I say, I am not writing anything new. This is the old, old story. If you have a problem with this, it would be a wise thing for you to get honest with yourself about your spiritual condition and search the scripture. ("Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:39-40) Then come to the person of the gospel--the Lord Jesus Christ. ("He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." I John 5:12) And then you will have the product of the gospel:

- 1) Spiritual conversion.
- 2) Outward change.
- 3) Continual growth.

This is the truth of the gospel. I know it is only a skeletal outline, but if you have any questions concerning what I have written or want more in depth understanding, contact me. We have a lot of material written and on CDs concerning this subject and we would be glad to send it to you free of charge just for the asking. We care for your soul.

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